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ABSTRACT

This teacher activity package deals with the process of decision making in children. It assumes that fundamental to decision making is an awareness of one's own opportunity to make decisions as well as an understanding of the process itself. It also assumes that children can be helped, by teachers and other influential persons, to see and accept the probable consequences of their choices. The objectives of the decision making activities included in this package are to stimulate students' awareness of their decision making opportunities, to provide students some decision making opportunities, and to facilitate students' understanding of the process of decision making. The purpose and procedure of each exercise is provided for the teacher's use. The activities include role playing situations, decision making stories, and questionnaires. Some activities deal with questions concerning the use of drugs and alcohol. (Author/PK)

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TEACHER ACTIVITY PACKAGE

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DECISION MAKING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
BASIC CONSTRUCTS OF DECISION MAKING THEORY	2
DECISION MAKING STORIES #1 and #2 - GRADES 4-6	4
DECISION MAKING QUESTIONS - GRADES 2-6	13
DECIDING TO DECIDE - GRADES 4-6	16
WHO DECIDES? - GRADES 3-6	18
INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING SITUATIONS	20
GRADES 4-6	21
GRADES 5-6	24
YOU DECIDE: OPEN ENDED STORIES	27
"New Student" - GRADES 2-6	28
"The Shoplifter" - GRADES 2-6	28
"Money" - GRADES 2-6	28
"The Lost Ring" - GRADES 2-6	28
"The Stranger" - GRADES 2-3	29
"Picked On" - GRADES 2-3	29
"Temptation" - GRADES 2-3	29
"A Headache" - GRADES 2-3	29
"Copy Cat" - GRADES 4-6	30
"A First Friend" - GRADES 4-6	30
"The Dope" - GRADES 4-6	30
"The 'In' Group" - GRADES 4-6	30
"Spending the Money" - GRADES 4-6	30

Page

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING 31

"Playing a Joke" - GRADE 3 32

"Pills" - GRADE 4 33

"Tranquilizers" - GRADE 5 34

"You Get The Cigarettes" - GRADE 6 35

"Sneaking Wine" - GRADE 6 36

"Grass, Man" - GRADE 6 37

BIBLIOGRAPHY 38

DRUG PREVENTION EDUCATION

Cooperative Educational Service Agency Number Eight
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Revised September 1, 1977

INTRODUCTION TO DECISION MAKING ACTIVITY PACKAGE

This package is concerned with the process of decision making. Fundamental to decision making is an awareness of one's own opportunities to make decisions, as well as an understanding of the process itself. Choosing from alternatives is, in essence, what decision making involves. It is important, however, that children are helped to see the probable consequences of their choices and are taught that they must accept the consequences that follow.

The objectives of this Decision Making Activity Package (DAP) are to stimulate students' awareness of their decision making opportunities; to provide students some decision making opportunities; and to facilitate students' understanding of the process of decision making.

Suggested grade levels have been assigned to each activity. A few of the suggested grade levels for the activities in this revised edition are different than those previously listed and some of the role playing situations were taken out of this package.

Revised September 1, 1977

BASIC CONSTRUCTS OF DECISION MAKING THEORY

These decision making exercises are developed from a theory of decision making. Some of the basic constructs of this theory are as follows:

1. Every person must make numerous decisions, yet few are taught the decision making process and how to use it.

2. Conscious use of the decision making process can increase personal happiness, satisfaction, and self-esteem.

3. Decision making is a learned process. Becoming aware of the process and becoming aware of one's opportunities to make decisions can free an individual to be and to become what he or she chooses.

Maturity is a process of becoming accountable for oneself; of making one's own decisions; and of accepting the consequences thereof.

Three aspects of the decision making process that must be considered in making a decision are as follows:

1. Considering the Alternatives - What are the options or possibilities? Consciously asking oneself this question and contemplating upon it is a first step. If one is having difficulty in thinking of alternatives, other people might be able to help. Asking others for their ideas, suggestions, or how they might deal with the situation often results in more alternatives. Another means of coming up with alternatives is to think about what a person you admire might do in a similar situation.

2. Weighing the Consequences of Each Alternative - What will happen if this alternative is chosen? What will happen if another alternative is chosen, or a third, or a fourth, etc.? Since there usually exists uncertainty as to precisely what will happen if a particular alternative is chosen, the possible consequences and the probability of each consequence occurring need to be dealt with.

3. Choosing From Alternatives - (a) What do you want to happen? Which alternative will most nearly provide you with what you want? (b) Which alternative do you feel most comfortable choosing? Which alternative seems to fit you best? Which alternative seems like the one you should choose? Which alternative do you feel like acting upon?

Basic Constructs of Decision Making Theory - Continued

Often the person making a decision is uncertain as to what is the right thing to do. The issue of what is right and wrong is deeply embedded into one's own value system; a value system which traditionally stems from one's home and church. Nevertheless, how one stands with a particular value system is commonly a matter of confusion and uncertainty. To deal with this matter, a six point test has been developed by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, which reflects upon one's value system and facilitates deciding. The six points are as follows:

1. Does the course of action you plan to follow seem sensible and honorable to you? Never mind what anyone else has to say. If it does, it is probably right.

2. Does it pass the test of sportsmanship? In other words, if everyone followed this same course of action, would the results be beneficial for all?

3. Where will your plan of action lead? How will it affect others? What will it do to you?

4. Will you think well of yourself when you look back at what you have done?

5. Try to separate yourself from the problem. Pretend for a moment that it is the problem of the person you most admire. Ask yourself, "How would that person handle it?"

6. Hold up the final decision to the glaring light of publicity. Would you want your family and friends to know what you have done? The decisions we make in the hope that no one will find out, are usually wrong.

When implemented, this decision making theory can free an individual's head and heart. That is to say, the personal freedom which emanates from decision making is both cognitive and emotional. The cognitive is a realization that the conscious implementation of decision making gives one the opportunity to choose for oneself the best alternative. The emotional aspect which accompanies this is an exciting feeling of freedom - something truly beyond the scope of words - a high which can help fill one's personal needs and supplant the high of drugs.

DECISION MAKING STORIES

GRADES 4 - 6

Purpose:

To stimulate students' awareness of their own opportunities to make decisions; to teach students some of the basic concepts involved in decision making.

Procedure:

The following is a set of two stories which compare and contrast the decision making of two similar, though quite different students. One student displays good and the other, poor decision making skills.

Teachers using this instructional unit have found that this activity works best when each student is given a copy of the stories and the teacher reads the stories outloud to the class. Reading the stories to the class (without providing each student a copy) has resulted in much more student involvement than having the students read the stories themselves.

Both stories should be dealt with as one instructional unit. That is, Decision Making Story #1 should be read to the class followed by the questions listed. Then Decision Making Story #2 should be read followed by the questions.

DECISION MAKING STORY #1

We're going to go through a day in a person's life. This person is about your age, lives in a neighborhood like yours, and goes to a school like yours. We'll call this person Kathy. (The name and the sex do not matter. It could just as well be Carl, Jane or Jack.) Our emphasis is going to be on the decisions Kathy makes and how she makes decisions. Try to keep track of all the chances Kathy has to make decisions. Count them as they occur.

It's 7:00 a.m. or 7:30 a.m., whatever time you usually get up on a school day. Kathy's alarm goes off and she gets out of bed. Her day is beginning. Kathy goes over to her closet and looks at the clothes she has hanging there. She shuffles through her dresses, pantsuits, slacks, blouses, levis, and sweaters. Kathy hears her father say it's very cold outside, so she decides to wear a pair of thick warm slacks and a heavy sweater. She finishes dressing and joins her mother, father, and older brother at the breakfast table. Her mother asks, "Kathy, would you like eggs or warm cereal for breakfast?" Kathy decides to have warm cereal because she had eggs for breakfast yesterday. A few minutes later her father leaves for work and her brother leaves for school. Kathy doesn't have to leave until 20 minutes after her brother, so she has a few minutes alone with her mother.

"Mom, I'm trying to decide who to invite to my birthday party."

Her mother says, "We want you to have a happy birthday, Kathy, so go ahead and invite all of your friends."

"That's just it mom, I can't decide who my friends are."

"Well, you think about it Kathy, and give me a list with all the names on it tonight. You'd better get started for school now or you'll be late."

On her way to school, Kathy tries to decide who to invite to her party. "Who are my friends?" she asks herself. "Well, LINDA and SUE will definitely be invited because they are my very best friends. BOB and JOE are both kind of nice, even if they are boys. I think I'll invite them too. BILL is a bully. He argues and picks on people. No one gets along with him, including me. I don't want any arguments or fights at my party, so I don't think I'll invite him. CHERYL and PATTY both live in my neighborhood and go to my school. I like to play with them because we have a lot of fun together. The only problem is that Linda and Cheryl don't like each other very well. I don't want Linda to have a bad time at my party because I invited Cheryl, but after all, it is my party and I should be able to invite whomever I want. I'll just have to explain to Linda why I am inviting Cheryl and hope she'll understand. Maybe Linda and Cheryl will even begin liking each other after my party, who knows. Let me see, who else should I invite?"

Over the lunch hour, Kathy had a chance to talk with her two good friends, Linda and Sue. "Hey," Kathy said, "my birthday is coming up soon and I'm having a party. The trouble is I don't know who all to invite. Since you two are my best friends, I thought maybe you could give me some suggestions."

Her friend Linda said, "How about SANDY, JANE, and KAREN? "They're nice and they play with us a lot. JACK and SAM are OK, too. They work with us in science class and they invited all of us to their birthday parties. Why not invite them?"

Her other friend, Sue, said, "I hope you don't invite RANDY because he's always hanging around me. I think he has a crush on me, but I really can't stand him."

During some free time later in the day, Kathy thought about what her friends had said. By the time school was out, Kathy knew who she wanted to invite to her party. Walking home from school with Linda and Sue, Kathy told them of her choices. "In addition to you two," Kathy said, "I am inviting SANDY, JANE, KAREN, PATTY, CHERYL, BOB, JOE, JACK, SAM, and RANDY." She turned to her friend, Linda, and said, "I know that you and Cheryl don't get along too well, but she is my friend and I like her. I hope you understand." She turned to her other friend, Sue, and said, "I thought about not inviting Randy because he bothers you, Sue, but Randy has helped me out several times when Bill started picking on me. Randy also talks the boys into letting us girls play softball and basketball with them. He is a good friend to me and I want him at my party. I will tell him not to bother you, Sue, if you want me to."

The big decision was made. Kathy's list was complete and she was happy with her decision. When she arrived home, she gave the list to her mother.

After dinner, Kathy had another decision to make. She loved the cartoon character PEANUTS and tonight at 8:00 there was a PEANUTS SPECIAL on television. However, she had a math test tomorrow morning to study for. The test would be on materials that she was having trouble with. She knew if she didn't study for the test, she would probably do poorly. Kathy really liked PEANUTS' specials and she might not get to see another one for quite a while. Kathy wondered what to do.

Kathy decided to study her math until 8:00 and if she felt she knew the materials that would be on her math test, she would then watch the PEANUTS SPECIAL. If she didn't feel that she knew her math, she would not watch it. She knew she would be disappointed if she didn't watch it but maybe it would be on television again sometime as a rerun.

Decision Making Story #1 - Continued

Kathy studied her math really hard but at 8:00 she still didn't feel that she knew it as well as she could, so she continued to study.

At 9:00 Kathy decided to go to bed. She wanted to get a good night's sleep and wake up fresh in the morning. She was glad she decided to study her math instead of watching the PEANUTS SPECIAL on television because she really felt that she was prepared for her test in the morning.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

1. How many opportunities did Kathy have to make a decision? (Any answer is acceptable since the number of decision making opportunities Kathy had depends on one's perspective; i.e. the decision concerning who to invite to her birthday party can be viewed as one decision or as a number of individual decisions.)

2. What are some of the decisions Kathy made?

   Some things to consider when making a decision are:

   THE ALTERNATIVES
   THE CONSEQUENCES
   ONE'S OWN FEELINGS (what you want)

   Let's consider the first of these: THE ALTERNATIVES. Alternatives are choices. For example, when you go to Baskin-Robbins 31 Flavor Ice Cream Stores you have 31 alternatives; 31 flavors to choose from.

3. Let's consider one of the decisions Kathy had to make; who to invite to her birthday party. When Kathy was thinking about who to invite to her party, how many alternatives did she consider (3, 5, 10, or 20)?

   Another part of decision making is CONSIDERING THE CONSEQUENCES. Consequences are what will happen if you choose a particular alternative. Considering the consequences is a process that goes something like this:

   "If I do this, what will happen?"

   "If I do that, what will happen?"

4. Did Kathy consider the consequences of what might happen if she invited BILL, the bully, to her party?

Another part of decision making is CONSIDERING ONE'S OWN FEELINGS. For example, when you are deciding which flavor of ice cream to choose at Baskin-Robbins, you look at all the different flavors and consider your own feelings. You do something like this:

> "Mmm, I like banana. I don't like chocolate chip. Mmm, I like almond cluster, too. Since I had almond cluster last week, I think I'll have banana today."

When you have chosen banana over almond cluster ice cream, you have acted on your feelings.

DECISION MAKING STORY #2

Now, we're going to go through a day in another person's life. This person is also about your age, lives in a neighborhood like yours, and goes to a school like yours. We'll call this person John. (The name and the sex do not matter. It could just as well be Carol, Jane, or Jack.) Our emphasis is going to be on the decision making opportunities John has and how he makes decisions. Try to keep track of all the chances John has to make decisions. Count each chance he has.

It's 7:00 a.m. or 7:30 a.m., whatever time you usually get up on a school day. John's alarm goes off and he gets out of bed. His day is beginning. John goes over to his dresser and looks at the clothes he has there. He shuffles through his slacks, levis, shirts, and sweaters. He hears his father say it's very cold outside, but John pays no attention because he wants to wear his light cotton slacks and a short sleeve shirt. He finishes dressing and joins his mother, father, and older sister at the breakfast table. His mother asks, "John, would you like eggs or warm cereal for breakfast?"

John says, "I can't decide, Mom, whichever you think." His mother gives him warm cereal. John just takes a few spoonfuls of the cereal. He doesn't really like warm cereal. A few minutes later, his father leaves for work and his sister leaves for school. John doesn't have to leave until 20 minutes after his sister so he has a few minutes alone with his mother.

"Mom, did you send out the invitations to my birthday party yet?"

His mother says, "No, I am waiting for you to give me a list with the names of the people you want to invite to your party."

"Well, I haven't thought much about it," John said. "How about if you just do it, Mom?"

"No, John, your father and I would like you to have a happy birthday and we want you to invite all of your friends."

"Ah, Mom, I can't. You do it, okay? Please!"

"John, you think about it and give me a list with all the names on it tonight. You'd better get started for school now or you'll be late."

On his way to school, John thought to himself, "Who should I invite to my party? Well, I know one person I definitely am not going to invite to my party. That is TOM. He is always making fun of me and calling me names in front of the other guys.

I definitely do not want him at my party. I want to invite BOB and JOE for sure. I think I will wait until I talk to Bob and Joe before I decide who else to invite to my party. After all, they are my best friends and I spend most of my time with them. They'll know who I should invite." John stopped thinking about his party because he was really cold. John thinks to himself, "I think maybe I should have worn warmer clothes." He ran the rest of the way to school.

Over the lunch hour, John had a chance to talk with Bob and Joe. "Hey," John said. "My birthday is coming up soon and I'm having a party. The trouble is I don't know who to invite. I want you two guys to come since you are my best friends. I thought maybe you could tell me who else to invite." Bob and Joe both thought that Tom should be invited to the party because Tom was always the life of the party.

John said, "Oh, yeah, Tom.....Okay, I'll invite Tom." By the time school was out, John had only three names on his list: Bob and Joe, his best friends, and Tom, the guy he did not like.

After school, John went home and watched television for awhile. Just before dinner, his mother asked him for the list. Without really thinking, he wrote down a few names as fast as he could. Bob, Joe, Tom, Sam, Pete, Mary, Scott, and Mark. He only invited one girl to his party. It took him less than a minute to complete his list. He hardly thought about it. Even though Bob and Joe were the only two people on the list that he got along with, John figured that he would still have a great time at his party. After all, parties are always fun. He gave the list to his mother.

After dinner, John joined his father in watching the Bucks basketball game on television. This was one of the most important games of the season and nothing was more important to John at this moment than watching the game. John didn't seem to be worried about the math test he was having tomorrow morning. He figured he would do poorly on it anyway since he didn't understand the materials. This basketball game was just too good to miss. When the basketball game was over at 9:00, John and his father discussed it briefly. After a few minutes, John's father left the room. John stayed and watched TV even though the show that was on was boring to him. John was really tired and knew it was past his bedtime, but since no one told him to go to bed, why should he?

At 10:00 his mother said, "John, it's past your bedtime. You have school tomorrow so please go to bed!"

John said good-night and went to bed. However, he was unable to sleep because he kept thinking about the math test he would be taking in the morning. John kept worrying about how unprepared he was for the test and how tired he would be in the morning.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

1. How many chances did John have to make a decision?

2. Did Kathy and John have about the same number of chances to make decisions?

3. What was the first decision making opportunity John had? What was the first decision making opportunity Kathy had? Who made the better decision? Why was it a better decision?

4. Which one do you think enjoyed their breakfast the most, Kathy or John? Why?

5. When John was thinking about who to invite to his party, how many people did he consider inviting (3, 5, 10, or 20)? Did John consider the alternatives?

6. John only invited one girl to his party. What are the possible consequences, i.e., what might happen as a result? Did John consider the consequences?

7. Did John consider his own feelings when he invited Tom to his birthday party? Whose feelings did he act on? Do you think that it is good to let your friends make your decisions for you?

8. Did John consider the consequences of not studying for his math test? Did Kathy?

Now let's leave Kathy and John and consider decision making in your own life.

1. When you are going to watch television, how many of you do some decision making? ("What's there to watch?" "Which show do I like?")

2. Take a look at the clothes you are wearing today. How many of you did some decision making about the clothes you are wearing today? ("What could I wear today?" "Is this too warm or too casual?" "Do I like these slacks?")

3. How many of you do some decision making concerning who your friends are going to be? ("Who could I hang around with?" "Who do I like?" "Will I get in trouble if I hang around with that gang?")

4. How many of you believe you have quite a few opportunities to make decisions in your own life? What is an example of a decision making opportunity you have? (Each class member who volunteers, can share at least one chance he/she had to make a decision in his/her life today. He/she can share at least one chance he/she had to make a decision in his/her life this week.)

Decision Making Story #2 - Continued

Some possible follow-up exercises:

A. Establish a situation in which students are faced with a decision. For example, suppose you were all alone with one of your friends and that friend offered you some alcohol. What could you decide to do? What would you decide to do? As another example, suppose one of your classmates was having difficulty making friends. What could you possibly do? What would you decide to do?

B. Ask students to write about a particularly difficult decision making situation they have experienced or that they know somebody else has experienced. This could be done as an English assignment.

C. Role play situations in which a decision must be made. The situations could be those generated in B (above) or ones structured by the teacher or by a small group of students.

D. Having established a decision making situation, brainstorm possible alternatives as well as possible consequences of selected alternatives.

E. Focus upon decision making opportunities which arise in the classroom. Point them out. Stimulate student discussion of alternatives, the consequences of each alternative, and personal feelings about each alternative.

DECISION MAKING QUESTIONS

GRADES 2 - 6

Purpose:

The objective of this teaching strategy is to have a student look at his own feelings, attitudes, thoughts, or values on a given situation and let him decide the outcome without judgment or moralizing on the teacher's part.

One rule that should be followed is that the teacher should create a climate in his classroom in which children are free to decide for themselves those values they want. Another is that a teacher should not impose his value or values upon the children. He might express his value or values in much the same way he is trying to have the students express theirs, by saying, "This is the way I see it or believe."

Group Size:

Classroom size.

Time Required:

Best used on a 10-15 minute basis.

Materials Required:

None.

Physical Setting:

Classroom situation.

The following questions are suggestions that could be used in eliciting value decisions in children. Not all questions will be appropriate for each grade level.

1. If I had $100.....?
2. If I could go wherever I pleased on weekends, I would.....?
3. If I could do anything I pleased today.....?
4. What would I like to be when I grow up?
5. Who is my favorite person in radio, television, movies, sports, history stories, in the news, etc.....?
6. What people in stories, movies, radio, etc., would I like to invite to a party.....?
7. What is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen?
8. What is the ugliest thing I have ever seen?
9. What was the most fun I have ever had?
10. What was my most embarrassing moment?
11. What was the spookiest thing that I know of?
12. What is the scariest thing that I know of?
13. What was the worst thing I ever did?
14. What was the nicest or kindest thing I ever did?

15. What was the best dream I ever had?
16. What was the worst dream I ever had?
17. What is the most fun to do in school?
18. What is the worst part of school?
19. What is the most fun to do after school, Saturdays, Sundays, summer?
20. What is the least fun after school, Saturdays, etc.?
21. What part of the world would I like most to go to? Least?
22. Why do we have war?
23. What is right? What is wrong?
24. Who tells us what's right? What's wrong?
25. How do we know they are right?
26. Why does the world have people in it?
27. What are people for?
28. Why are there good people and bad people?
29. Who says they are good or bad?
30. Where do we come from?
31. Why are we here?
32. What is being happy?
33. What is being sad?
34. What was the saddest time for me?
35. What is mother for? What is father for?
36. Who would I like to be like when I grow up?
37. Who is the meanest person I know of in movies, radio, T.V.?
38. What does red mean?
39. What does black mean? White? Yellow? Blue?
40. Who is a Black American?
41. What is punishment? Why am I punished? What for?
42. What is crime? Who says so?
43. Who am I? What am I like?
44. What's good about where I live? What's not good about it?
45. What is a friend?
46. Why do we get mad? What makes me mad?
47. Why do people fight? When is it right to fight? When not?
48. What would I do if I were the teacher?

The following are some group decision making situations where students can be involved in the decision making process.

1. What would be the most suitable way to arrange the chairs and tables in this room?
2. What would be the best way to decide on classroom helpers?
3. What would be some good ways to clean up after activity periods?
4. What would be some good ways to remind the class that they are getting too noisy in the room?
5. What are some good ideas for ways to line up?
6. What are some good ways to keep our library corner looking nice?
7. What are some ways to take good care of our class pet?
8. What are some good procedures to follow for going to the bathroom, taking drinks, sharpening pencils?

9. How could we decide if the clean-up job has been done properly?
10. How can we decide how to share our things?
11. What are some things we can do to get along better with each other in school?
12. What are our individual responsibilities to the group?
13. What are some good ways to make new friends?
14. Going on a trip?
    1. How shall we decide about the method (s) of transportation?
    2. What rules do we need to set up for our behavior?
    3. What are some things a person could do if he got lost?
    4. What time factors are involved? How can they be worked out?
    5. What money factors are involved? How shall we work this out?
    6. What other arrangements have to be made? How shall we work these out?

DECIDING TO DECIDE

GRADES 4 - 6

Purpose:

The object of this exercise is to have students become aware that decisions are not easily made. Often not deciding to make a decision is a decision in itself.

Procedure:

The teacher can make a master in order to reproduce the exercise for class use, or use an overhead projector or chalkboard. Students fill out the questions individually without any previous discussion. After completion, the teacher discusses with the class the difficulty which can arise when a person decides not to act, or when a decision is made only after great difficulty. Discuss the point that a student might think he has not made a decision when he actually has. (Exercise is on the following page.)

DECIDING TO DECIDE

GRADES 4 - 6

HI & LOIS BY MORT & DICK BROWNE

(Appleton Post Crescent - 9/7/71)

1. Can you think of times when you have had to make a decision?

2. Give an example of a time when you decided not to decide.

3. What was your reason for not deciding?

4. Was your decision not to decide a decision?

5. Was it a good decision? Why or why not?

6. What is the most recent decision you have made?

WHO DECIDES?

GRADES 3 - 6

Purpose:

To stimulate awareness of decision making and to indicate the relationship between privilege and responsibility.

Task:

One example could be the making of bulletin boards about drugs.

Procedure:

Teacher divides the class into two groups. Group #1 is asked to do some constructive activity (homework, reading, etc.) while Group #2 carries out their part of this project, and vice versa.

Group #1 is the first to work on the task to be completed. The task completed could be any task which can be broken down into steps or parts through which individual students can contribute to the total completion of the task. An example of a task which the students could be asked to complete is the making of a bulletin board on drugs. Group #1 is the nondirective group in which the students plan what the bulletin board message will be; how that message will be conveyed; and who will do what toward the completion of the task. Throughout the exercise, the teacher should place the decision making upon the students.

After Group #1 has completed the task, Group #2 should proceed. With this group, the teacher does all the planning and merely tells students what tasks they are to do. For example, some students might be given a stencil and paper and told which letters to copy and cut out. Another student might be told to cut out the pictures on pages 21 and 74 of the November McCall's(example), and to paste them in the bottom left hand corner of the poster. The teacher should structure and direct these activities as much as possible. The students are not told why they are doing these tasks.

After each group has completed the task, the teacher leads a discussion with both of the groups together, about how the students felt while completing the task. Some possible discussion questions are as follows:

1. In Group #1, who decided what to do and how to do it? (teacher or students)

Who Decides? - Continued

2. In Group #2, who decided what to do and how to do it? (teacher or students)

3. Did Group #2 feel belittled, talked down to, or bored?

4. Did Group #1 feel important and worthy because the teacher considered them capable of handling the task themselves?

5. Which group was given the most responsibility? Which group was given the most privileges? How are privileges and responsibility related?

6. What are some responsibilities that you are given?

7. Are there any situations in this classroom in which you could be given more responsibility?

INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING SITUATIONS

Purpose:

To stimulate students to explore and to decide from among alternatives.

Procedure:

The following are a series of situations where the individual must choose the best thing to do from the alternatives given.

The teacher may read each situation to the class or present it on the blackboard or in printed form. The teacher then asks individual students to choose the alternative they feel is best.

Students should be given an opportunity to explain why they chose a particular alternative.

INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING SITUATIONS

GRADES 4 - 6

Here are some experiences that you may have. In each case, put a check mark by what you think is the best thing to do.

1. A girl may come to school poorly dressed. She may be absent much of the time. I can . . . . .

   _____ unknown to others in the class, make her a gift of clothes.

   _____ make fun of the way she dresses.

   _____ ignore her.

   _____ tell her I miss her when she is absent.

   _____ invite her to walk (or ride) to and from school with me.

   _____ try to understand that she is not to blame for her poor dress and many absences.

2. A child of a different race or different nationality may enroll in my class at school. I can . . . . .

   _____ ignore him/her.

   _____ embrace him/her whenever I can.

   _____ be friendly.

   _____ invite him/her to join me and my group at play.

   _____ give him/her help if he/she needs it.

   _____ invite him/her to my home.

3. A family of another race may move into my neighborhood. I can . . . . .

   _____ get the neighborhood boys and girls to make fun of the newcomers.

   _____ invite the children of the family to play in my yard.

   _____ share my things with them.

   _____ have a neighborhood party for my new friends.

   _____ never speak to them.

   _____ ask my playmates to include the new children in our game.

4. One of my friends may be rude or unkind to another. I can . . . .

_____ tell him I do not like his actions.

_____ join him in his wrong behavior.

_____ find some ways to help him realize his mistake.

_____ do what I can to make the other feel better.

_____ pay no attention to either one.

5. I may see a bully harming someone physically. I can . . . . .

_____ pass by on the other side.

_____ cheer the bully on.

_____ try to stop him by persuasion.

_____ try to stop him by force.

_____ report the cruelty at once to the school principal, someone in authority, or an adult.

6. The group may exclude me. I can . . . . .

_____ try to think what fault or mistake of mine caused them to drop me and try to correct the cause.

_____ "turn up my nose" at them and their activities.

_____ find ways to get even and spoil their fun whenever I can.

_____ continue to be pleasant and polite to everyone.

_____ form a new group that will be unfriendly to the first.

_____ quietly find new friends.

7. One particular girl or boy from your class seems to be alone and without friends. I can . . . . .

_____ find ways to draw him/her into the group.

_____ make a point of being friendly.

_____ try to understand why he/she has no friends.

_____ ask an adult how I can help this person.

_____ shrug off any thought of helping, saying "I have my own problems."

_____ find ways of helping him/her overcome shyness, boldness, untidiness, language problems, study problems or whatever is possibly causing the student to be lonely and without friends.

Watching Television

You love the cartoon character "Peanuts" and a "Peanuts Special" is going to be on television tonight. Tomorrow is a school day and your science project is due. You've worked hard on this project because you enjoyed it, but you still have some more work to do before it's finished. Your teacher has said that if a project is handed in late, ten points automatically will be deducted from the grade.

Choice	Alternative Responses
_____	Watch the "Peanuts Special" and hand in the project a day late.
_____	Watch the "Peanuts Special" and pretend you are sick the next day so you can stay home and finish the project.
_____	Resist the temptation to watch the special program; finish the science project.

If you think you would choose a different alternative to the ones above, please state it below.

INDIVIDUAL DECISION MAKING SITUATIONS

GRADES 5 - 6

Alcohol

You may or may not have ever used alcohol (booze). Someone you are close to (classmate, friend, relative, etc.) was killed in a head-on auto accident last night.

The driver of the other car was drunk and is in satisfactory condition. You examine your opinions on alcohol use. What do you think about the situation?

Choice	Alternative Responses
_____	It's just one of those things that happen all the time.
_____	You feel revenge toward the drunken driver because he was drunk.
_____	You become strictly anti-alcohol.

If you think you would choose a different alternative to the ones above, please state it below:

Smoking

You are with a group of friends in your bedroom and they start smoking cigarettes and indicate that you should join them.

Choice	Alternative Responses
_____	You agree and join in because it's OK.
_____	You go along with the idea because they are your friends.
_____	You do not include yourself in the activity because you like to be different and not always go along with the group.

If you think you would choose a different alternative to the ones above, please state it below:

Party With Friends

You have been invited to a party by a group of your friends. Your parents OK the idea but add that if there is any alcoholic beverages or cigarette smoking going on, they do not want you to be involved with that aspect of the party. You understand their concern and agree.

At the party, cigarettes and drinks are offered. You begin to feel the peer pressure and you see that you may be heckled and left out of the group. What can you do?

Choice	Alternative Responses
_____	Refuse because of your promise to your parents.
_____	Give in and break the promise to your parents.
_____	Try just one cigarette and one drink because once is all right.

If you think you would choose a different alternative to the ones above, please state it below:

YOU DECIDE: OPEN ENDED STORIES

Purpose:

To explore alternatives; and to decide from among the alternatives.

Introduction:

The following are a series of stories, each which present a situation where the individual is faced with having to make a decision. The teacher may read each story to the class; present it on a blackboard or in printed form; or each situation can be role played. Choosing the way of presentation is a decision making opportunity for the teacher. While the story is being presented, the teacher asks each student to pretend they are the person in the story. Student identification with the character is very important. After the story has been presented, the teacher facilitates student exploration of the alternatives open to the individual who must make a decision. Questions such as the following may be useful:

"What could _____ do in this situation?"

"What else might _____ do?"

"Does anyone have another possibility?"

"What else could _____ do?"

"What else?"

After brainstorming to explore the alternatives, the teacher can ask what the consequences of each alternative might be.

"If _____ had done this, what do you suppose would have happened as a result?"

"If _____ tried this, what would happen then?"

Upon having considered alternatives and consequences, the teacher can ask individual students what they would decide to do if they were that person. Different students might choose different alternatives. Teachers are then presented an opportunity to facilitate student respect and acceptance of other people despite differing opinions. Asking students to explain why they would choose a particular alternative will often provide other students with a different perspective, and will stimulate examination of their own choice. The teacher should model and reinforce acceptance and cooperative exploration of alternatives. A nonjudgmental approach on the part of teacher and students is mandatory. During the initial use of these exercises, the teacher may have to explain this to students.

YOU DECIDE: OPEN ENDED STORIES

GRADES 2 - 6

"New Student"

There is a new student in your classroom who has been there about a week and still does not seem to be making any friends. You see the new student walking around alone every day at recess. You are playing with a group of friends and you see the new student standing there watching you and your friends.

Optional Situation: Suppose the new student was of the opposite sex. What would you do then?

"The Shoplifter"

You go shopping with your mother. While you are in a store, you see someone take something off a store shelf; slip it into his/her pocket; and look around to see if anyone is looking. You see that person shoplift. That person did not know you saw him/her. Your mother sees nothing.

"Money"

You are playing on the playground during recess and you find a five dollar bill. You pick it up and put it into your pocket. When you return to your classroom, one of your classmates is crying because she lost a five dollar bill. The teacher asks the class if anyone has found five dollars.

"The Lost Ring"

Your older sister/brother has a beautiful ring that you are dying to wear. You have asked her/him several times if you could wear it to school just once but she/he always says no. One day you decide to just take it from her/his jewelry box and wear it. She/he will never know you borrowed it. When you come home from school that day, you look down at your finger. The ring is gone!

YOU DECIDE: OPEN ENDED STORIES

GRADES 2 - 3

"The Stranger"

You are walking home from school alone, and a car stops beside you. You do not know the man who is driving the car, but he smiles and asks you if you want a ride. He says he knows where you live because he has seen you playing in the neighborhood. He says, "Get in. I'll give you a ride."

"Picked On"

One of the fourth grade boys has been picking on you, teasing you, calling you names, and pushing you around. This happens every morning before school.

"Temptation"

One of the neighbor's children is about your age. You are at their house and their parents are not home. Nobody is in the house except you and your neighbor friend. The neighbor friend goes into the refrigerator, takes out a can of beer and says to you, "Do you want some?"

"A Headache"

You have a headache. Your mother went next door for a few minutes to visit the neighbor. You know exactly where the aspirin is kept because you have seen your mother and father take them. You can't read the label but you know what the aspirin bottle looks like.

YOU DECIDE: OPEN ENDED STORIES

GRADES 4 - 6

"Copy Cat"

You are having an important test. Everybody is busy completing the test. You see the person sitting behind you peeking at the answers of the person beside you. This person is copying!

"A First Friend"

You just moved to a different town. You don't know anybody. On the first day of school, one of your new classmates is very friendly to you. You are very glad to have made a friend right away. Then a few days later you find out that most of the other students in your class don't like your new friend. You don't want all the others to dislike you. You wonder what to do.

"The Dope"

The girl next door is in high school. She is rather quiet and doesn't seem to have many friends but she talks to you a lot. Today she says to you, "Hey, I've got some marijuana here. Want to try some of it?"

"The 'In' Group"

You are asked to join this one group in school that you have been wanting to join for a long time. However, before you can become an official member of the group, you have to go through an initiation. For the initiation, you are required to go into a department store and steal a record without being caught. It really is important to you to become a member of this group.

"Spending the Money"

Tomorrow is your father's birthday. You have been doing some chores around the house so you could earn enough money to buy him a necktie. On the way to the store to buy your father's birthday present, you pass a store that's having a sale on transistor radios. You really want a transistor radio and you just have enough money to buy it.

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING

Purpose:

To give students an opportunity to make decisions through role playing.

Procedure:

The following is a series of role playing situations in which the participants are called upon to make a decision. Each situation is open ended and demands that the participants make a decision. Students should be encouraged to pretend that they are actually in the situation. They must decide what they would do in the situation. After the students have acted out the situation to the point of having clearly made and acted upon a decision, they might be asked to think of alternative decisions or other ways to deal with the situation, and then to role play their new alternative. Brainstorming, or the follow through procedure used for the Open Ended Stories, might also be utilized to facilitate exploration of possible alternatives. Role playing can be utilized as a means of trying on an alternative behavior to see if it fits.

While the role players are thinking of alternatives and acting them out, have the other class members think of alternatives and state them (or list them on the board).

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING

GRADE 3

"Playing a Joke"

Characters: Andy, Bill, and Freddie

Situation:

Andy is a shy, quiet boy who is in the second grade. As he walks home from school with Bill and Freddie, he finds something wrapped in foil. Unwrapping the foil, he sees what looks like candy. He is very hungry. He wonders if he should eat the 'candy'. He asks Bill and Freddie what to do. Since Bill and Freddie are older than Andy, Andy looks up to them and does whatever they tell him to do. Bill and Freddie like to play jokes on Andy.

Bill: "It's O.K. to eat that 'candy'."

Freddie: "Sure, Andy, it was wrapped in foil, wasn't it? It probably fell out of someone's lunch."

Andy: "What should I do?"

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING

GRADE 4

"Pills"

Characters: Sally, her friends, and Joan

Situation:

Sally and her friends are playing in the park when Joan, who has just moved into the neighborhood, approaches the group. She is extremely attractive and friendly. The group feels really flattered because of Joan's attention and asks Joan to join the group.

One day when Sally is visiting Joan, Joan shows Sally some of the yellow pills her mother keeps in the bathroom.

Joan: "I sneak some of these sometimes and they make me feel real good."

Sally: "My mother said I should never take any pills unless she gives them to me."

Joan: "Come on. Try one. Just one won't hurt."

Sally: "I don't know what to do."

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING

GRADE 5

"Tranquilizers"

Characters: Sue, Ann, and Sally

Situation:

Ann brings a bottle of tranquilizers to school. At recess time she gets Sue and Sally in a corner and shows them the pills. Ann wants the two girls to take some pills with her. Sally is for the idea. Sue is against it.

Ann: "Come on, Sally, swallow one. It won't hurt you. My mother takes them all the time."

Sally: "OK, I will if you will."

Ann: "Sure, I will. Here's one."

Sally: "Come on, Sue. If we take one, you've got to, too."

Sue: "I don't know. My mother doesn't want me to take pills."

Ann: "What's the matter? Are you afraid to do it?"

Sue:

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING

GRADE 6

"You Get The Cigarettes"

Characters: Mike, Bob, Bill, and Dave

Situation:

Dave is a quiet person who does not have a lot of friends. Mike has been a leader in almost all activities at school.

Bob and Bill are twins, who live next door to Dave. They have invited Mike to come over on Saturday afternoon. Mike suggests that on Saturday they all walk to the park, hide in the bushes, and smoke cigarettes. Since Dave's parents own a grocery store, Mike suggests that Dave bring some cigarettes from his parents' store, so they can all smoke.

Dave: "I don't smoke."

Mike: "It's handy for you to get them. We'll be counting on you to get them for us."

Dave:

GRADE 6

"Sneaking Wine"

Characters: Jim and Tom

Situation:

Jim and Tom are neighbors and they are playing in the yard.

Jim: "My parents made some homemade wine and they aren't home. Let's go over to my house and try some of it."

Tom: "My parents don't drink alcohol and I believe that alcohol is bad for me."

Jim: "No, it's really good for you. This wine makes you feel really good. Only 'squares' don't drink. Come on Tom, what do you say? Don't be a square."

Tom:

ROLE PLAYING SITUATIONS INVOLVING DECISION MAKING

GRADE 6

"Grass, Man"

Characters: Pete and Paul

Situation:

Walking home from school.

Pete: "Hey, let's stop at my house. My parents have gone out for supper."

Paul: "Well, I should go straight home."

Pete: "Aw, just stop a minute--I've found something great. Come and see."

Paul: "Will it take long? My mom gets mad if I'm late for supper."

Pete: "Let's hurry. Here we are. Come on in."

Paul: "Gee, my parents never go away and leave me alone."

Pete: "Here it is----smell. Good, eh?"

Paul: "What is it?"

Pete: "Grass, man----it's in. My big brother smokes it all the time."

Paul: "Wow! Is that what it smells like?"

Pete: "Let's try it, okay?"

Paul:

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